IN THE HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT AT AHMEDABAD

SPECIAL CIVIL APPLICATION No 3467 of 2002

For Approval and Signature:

Hon'ble MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

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1. Whether Reporters of Local Papers may be allowed to see the judgements? : NO

2. To be referred to the Reporter or not? : NO

3. Whether Their Lordships wish to see the fair copy of the judgement? : NO

4. Whether this case involves a substantial question of law as to the interpretation of the Constitution of India, 1950 of any Order made thereunder? : NO

5. Whether it is to be circulated to the Civil Judge? : NO

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FIROZBHAI ANWARBHAI FRUITWALA

Versus

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Appearance:

1. Special Civil Application No. 3467 of 2002

MR NM KAPADIA for Petitioner No. 1

MR SJ DAVE, AGP for Respondent No. 1-3

CORAM : MR.JUSTICE R.P.DHOLAKIA

Date of decision: 10/05/2002

ORAL JUDGEMENT

The petitioner has been detained under the provisions of Gujarat Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, 1985 (hereinafter referred to as `the Act of 1985') by the order dated 8-3-2002 passed by the Police Commissioner, Surat City and he has been declared

as bootlegger.

2. It is now well settled that unless the activities of a person as bootlegger has disturbed the maintenance of public order, he cannot be detained under the Act. Reliance is placed on a decision of the case of Piyush Kantilal Mehta Vs. Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad & Ors. reported in AIR 1989 SC 491.

3. I have heard learned advocate for the petitioner at length and learned AGP, Mr.S.J.Dave for the respondents. I have also perused the material on record. Learned advocate for the petitioner has stated that impugned order was passed relying upon a solitary offence registered under the Prohibition Act being D.C.B.Police Station III C.R.No.5676 of 2001. Learned advocate for the petitioner has also stated that father of the detenu has sent a representation on 15-3-2002 to the State Government and it has been received by the State Government on 18-3-2002 and though same has been rejected on 20-3-2002, said rejection of his representation has been communicated on 30-3-2002. In this regard, he has produced the acknowledgement card and the communication dated 30-3-2002 sent by the Home Department. Same are ordered to be taken on record. He has relied upon the case of Harish Pahwa Vs. State of U.P. and others, AIR 1981 S.C. 1126, more particularly para 3 which runs as under:

> "The representation made by a detenu has to be considered without any delay. The Supreme Court does not look at equanimity upon delays when the liberty of a person is concerned. Calling comments from other departments, seeking the opinion of Secretary after Secretary and allowing the representation to lie without being attended to is not the type of action which the State is expected to take in a matter of such vital importance. It is the duty of the State to proceed to determine representations with the utmost expedition, which means that the matter must be taken up for consideration as soon as such a representation is received and dealt with continuously (unless it is absolutely necessary to wait for some assistance in connection with it) until a final decision is taken and communicated to the detenu. Where this is not done the detention has to be declared unconstitutional."

4. In the present case, it appears that the father

of the detenu has sent the representation on 15-3-2002 to the State Government and though it was rejected by the State Govt. on 20-3-2002, same was communicated to the detenu on 30-3-2002 and hence, there is a delay in deciding the representation and communicating the rejection of his representation. However, no explanation has been putforward by the authority for the same. Since no explanation has been putforth by the concerned authorities for the aforesaid delay, the order of detention is illegal and the same cannot be sustained.

5. The petition is allowed. The impugned order of detention dated 8-3-2002 passed against the detenu is hereby quashed and set aside. The detenu Firozbhai Anwarbhai Fruitwala is ordered to be set at liberty forthwith, if not required in any other case. Rule is made absolute accordingly with no order as to costs. Direct service is permitted.

(R.P.DHOLAKIA,J.)
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